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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR RICE'S MEETING WITH DANISH CLIMATE
MINISTER HEDEGAARD

REF: COPENHAGEN 173

Classified By: Ambassador Susan Rice for reasons: 1.4 (b, d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Danish Climate Minister Hedegaard sought the Ambassador's views on the likelihood of Congressional adoption of climate change legislation by December, and encouraged USG engagement with China. She also hoped that U.S. leadership would draw out clearer positions from Japan and Canada. Ambassador Rice encouraged Hedegaard to emphasize the need for a truly global response and shared responsibility in addressing climate change. They exchanged views on the utility of a September 22 high-level climate event being convened by the Secretary-General, who briefed a select group of PermReps in a breakfast meeting that day attended by Rice and Hedegaard. End summary.

¶2. (U) Denmark Minister for Climate Change and Energy Connie Hedegaard (reftel) paid a call on Ambassador Rice May 6 to seek views on domestic U.S. actions on climate change and brainstorm on how Denmark and the UN in New York could most usefully contribute to a successful outcome at the December Conference of Parties ministerial in Copenhagen. Danish PermRep Carsten Staur accompanied the Minister.

U.S. Leadership Key to Bring Others On Board

¶3. (SBU) Hedegaard praised the vigor of the Obama Administration in addressing climate change and complimented the Ambassador on her active participation in a meeting that morning at the UK Mission featuring an address by and interactive discussion with Secretary-General (SYG) Ban and the UK-led "Friends on Climate Change" group (see para 6 below). The Minister asked about the state of Congressional deliberations on climate legislation and whether the Administration had a sequence of legislative priorities that could impact the timeline. Ambassador Rice underscored the Administration's commitment to climate legislation and assured that multiple legislative priorities could be engaged simultaneously; however, Congress substantially controls its own agenda.

¶4. (C) The Minister said the international community is looking to the U.S. for leadership, but noted that other developed countries must also show greater ambition, pointing specifically to Canada and Japan. Ambassador Rice agreed that all states need to engage on climate change to their fullest possible extent, and not treat negotiations like a game of poker. The U.S., she noted, is being completely transparent in its negotiating position given the need to hew closely to what Congress does. But for scientific and political reasons, it remains imperative that key developing states like China and India also to commit to actions. Hedegaard agreed, though she said she treats India and China

differently considering how far India lags behind China in terms of poverty rates and access to electricity. The Minister said she hopes that U.S.-China economic and climate dialogue will help China shorten the timetable for achieving its peak emissions. She sees lots of "low-hanging fruit" in terms of improving energy efficiency in China, but also thinks China is making more progress than many realize in building a greener future economy; the U.S. needs to join that competition for the jobs of tomorrow.

Denmark, UN Role?

15. (C) Asked what Denmark, as Conference of Parties host, and the UN could helpfully do to promote a successful outcome in Copenhagen, Ambassador Rice urged the Minister to reinforce the universality of the climate challenge and get all parties to lay their cards on the table rather than simply wait for Congressional action. The Danes should also consider contingencies in the event Congress does not adopt legislation before December, though Hedegaard said she did not want to lower expectations or pressure on states to achieve agreement in Copenhagen. Hedegaard also thought the SYG's high-level climate change event on September 22 could be an ideal way to spur heads of state to break deadlocks in the UNFCCC negotiations. Ambassador Rice expressed skepticism that the "usual format" for General Assembly events was conducive to meaningful progress, but Ambassador Staur replied that the SYG would arrange smaller working groups somehow. Ambassador Rice asked if the UN could do more to promote the adaptation/development nexus, and the

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Minister said the UNFCCC negotiations were making promising progress in that area. Ambassador Rice encouraged Hedegaard to further explore her areas of interest with U.S. climate special envoy Todd Stern.

SYG Addresses Friends on Climate Change

16. (SBU) In a breakfast meeting May 6, Ambassador Rice and a few other PermReps were invited to join the "Friends on Climate Change" group of ambassadors at the UK Mission for an address and discussion with SYG Ban. Ban offered his optimistic perspective on trends in various countries to work toward a successful outcome in Copenhagen, and Ambassador Rice underscored U.S. commitment and the need for active involvement by all states.
Rice